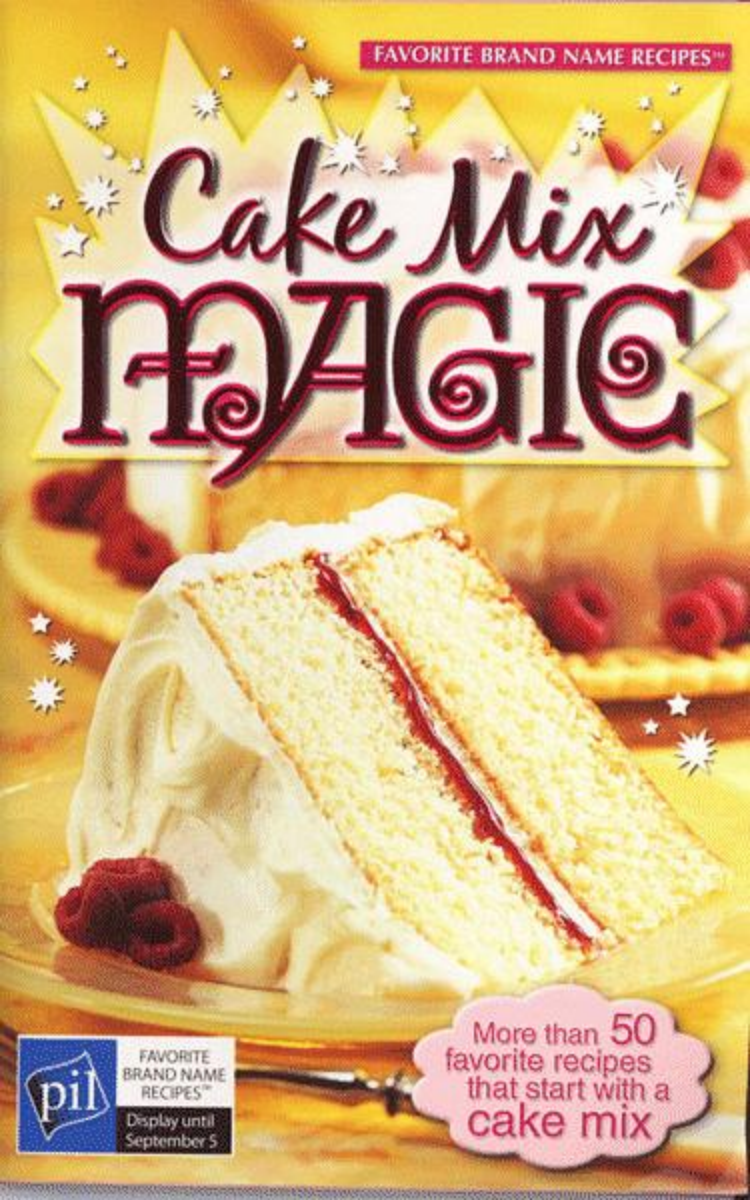
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FAVORITE BRAND NAME RECIPES™
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Pictured on the front cover: White Chocolate Lover's Cake (*page 95*).

Pictured on the back cover: (clockwise from top): Triple Chocolate Cake (*page 53*), Tres Leche Cake (*page 30*), and Mini Tiramisu (*page 48*).

Microwave Cooking: Microwave ovens vary in wattage. Use the cooking times as guidelines and check for doneness before adding more time.

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Baking Cakes 101

Tips to get the most magic from a cake mix

Something magical happens when a cake mix and a few ingredients bake into a beautiful and delicious dessert! From simple bundt cakes to kids' party cakes, they all start with a mix. The following tips can make every cake taste great and look spectacular.

Always Be Prepared

- Read the entire recipe to ensure that you have the necessary ingredients. Many ingredients can be substituted without affecting the final product—for example, apricot preserves for raspberry preserves, walnuts for pecans, raspberries for strawberries, or even a different flavor of instant pudding and pie filling mix.
- Always preheat the oven and prepare the baking pan before mixing.
- Have all ingredients at room temperature, if possible. The batter will blend better if the ingredients—especially the dairy products—are not cold.

Bake It Right!

- It's very important to use the proper size baking pan. If a pan is too small, the cake batter may overflow the sides and onto the oven; if a pan is too large, the cake may bake quicker and produce a smaller finished cake. If you're unsure of a pan's size, especially tube pans, fill an empty pan with water and then measure the liquid.
- Keep the oven door closed for the first 15 minutes of baking. This is the time when the cake rises most, so don't peek!
- Properly baked cakes will *tell* you when they're finished. First, the kitchen will smell great! Secondly, the cake starts to pull away from the sides of the pan and feels firm to the touch in the center. A toothpick or skewer inserted in the center comes out clean.
- Always let the cake cool in the pan at least 10 to 15 minutes. Loosen the sides gently and invert the cake onto a wire cooling rack. Let the cake cool completely before icing, wrapping, or freezing. Most of the cakes included in this issue will freeze well if properly wrapped.

Decorating Tips

There are some decorating supplies that, while not essential, will make icing and decorating cakes much easier.

- **Icing spatulas:** Straight or off-set, 10- or 12-inch.
- **Pastry Bags:** Cloth or disposable.
- **Pastry Tips:** A small basic tip set (don't forget the couplers).
- **Cardboards:** For layer cakes, it's easier to decorate and move the cake on a cardboard of the same size or slightly larger.
- **Icing Colors:** Paste colors are the most concentrated.

Check at your local craft or cake decorating store or online for decorating supplies.

Crazy for Bundts

Butterscotch Bundt Cake

Makes 12 servings

- 1 package (about 18 ounces) yellow cake mix *without* pudding in the mix
- 1 package (4-serving size) butterscotch instant pudding and pie filling mix
- 1 cup water
- 3 eggs
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ½ cup chopped pecans
- Powdered sugar (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray 10-inch fluted tube pan with nonstick cooking spray. Combine all ingredients except pecans and powdered sugar in large bowl. Beat with electric mixer at medium speed 2 minutes until well blended. Stir in pecans.

2. Pour into prepared pan. Bake 40 to 50 minutes or until cake springs back when lightly touched. Cool in pan on wire rack 10 minutes. Invert cake onto wire rack and cool completely. Sprinkle with powdered sugar.

Pistachio Walnut Bundt Cake: *Substitute white cake mix for yellow cake mix, pistachio pudding mix for the butterscotch pudding mix and walnuts for pecans.*

Orange Glazed Pound Cake

Makes 12 to 16 servings

1 package DUNCAN HINES® Moist Deluxe® Butter Recipe Golden Cake Mix
4 eggs
1 cup sour cream
⅓ cup vegetable oil
¼ cup plus 1 to 2 tablespoons orange juice, divided
2 tablespoons grated orange peel
1 cup confectioners' sugar

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Grease and flour 10-inch tube pan.

2. Combine cake mix, eggs, sour cream, oil, ¼ cup orange juice and orange peel in large bowl. Beat at medium speed with electric mixer for 2 minutes. Pour into prepared pan. Bake at 375°F for 45 to 50 minutes or until toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Cool in pan 25 minutes. Invert onto cooling rack. Cool completely.

3. Combine sugar and remaining 1 to 2 tablespoons orange juice in small bowl; stir until smooth. Drizzle over cake. Garnish as desired.

Fruit and Cake

Crunchy Peach Snack Cake

Makes 9 servings

- 1 package (9 ounces) yellow cake mix *without* pudding in the mix
- 1 container (6 ounces) peach yogurt
- 1 egg
- ¼ cup peach all-fruit spread
- ¾ cup square whole grain oat cereal with cinnamon, slightly crushed
- Whipped cream (optional)

1. Place rack in center of oven. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray 8-inch square baking pan with nonstick cooking spray.

2. Combine cake mix, yogurt and egg in medium bowl. Beat with electric mixer at low speed about 1 minute until moistened. Stop mixer; scrape down bowl. Increase speed to medium; beat 1 to 2 minutes until smooth.

3. Spread batter in prepared pan. Drop fruit spread by ½ teaspoonfuls over cake batter. Sprinkle with cereal.

4. Bake about 25 minutes or until toothpick inserted into center of cake comes out clean. Cool completely on wire rack. Serve with whipped cream, if desired.

Flapjack Party Stack

Makes 12 servings

- **1 package (about 18 ounces) yellow cake mix, plus ingredients to prepare mix**
- **1 container (16 ounces) vanilla frosting**
- **1 quart fresh strawberries, washed, hulled and sliced**
- **1 cup caramel or butterscotch ice cream topping**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease bottoms and sides of 4 (9-inch) round cake pans; line pans with waxed paper. Prepare and bake cake mix according to package directions. Let cakes cool in pans on wire racks 15 minutes. Remove from pans; cool completely.

2. Reserve ¼ cup frosting. Place one cake layer on serving plate; spread or pipe one-third of remaining frosting in swirls on cake to resemble whipped butter. Top with sliced strawberries. Repeat with next two cake layers, frosting and strawberries. Top stack with remaining cake layer.

3. Warm caramel topping in microwave just until pourable. Drizzle over cake. Spread or pipe remaining frosting in center; garnish with remaining strawberries.

Tres Leches Cake

Makes 12 to 15 servings

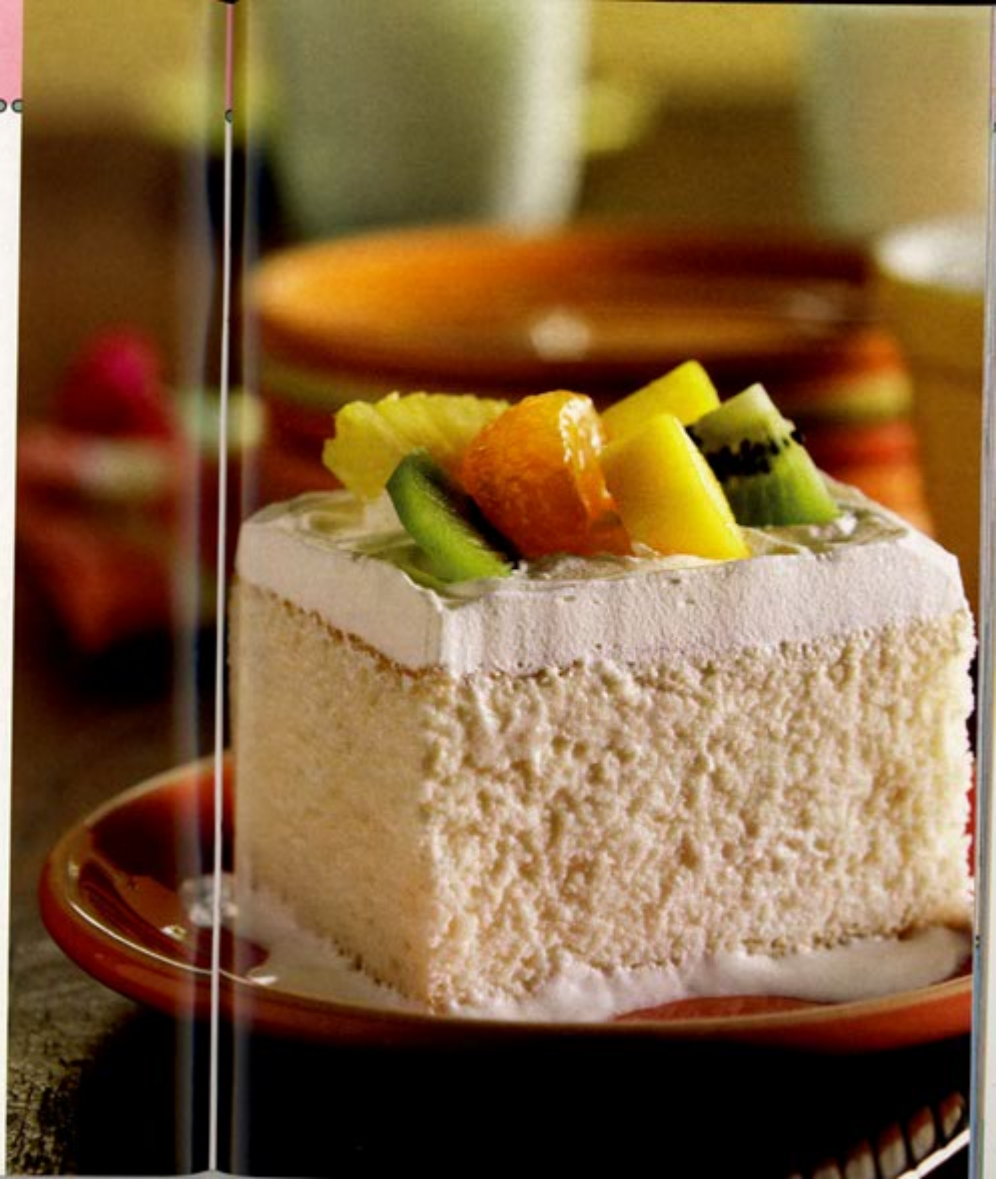
1 package (about 18 ounces) white cake mix, plus ingredients to prepare mix
1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
1 cup milk
1 cup (½ pint) whipping cream
1 container (8 ounces) whipped topping, thawed
Fresh fruit

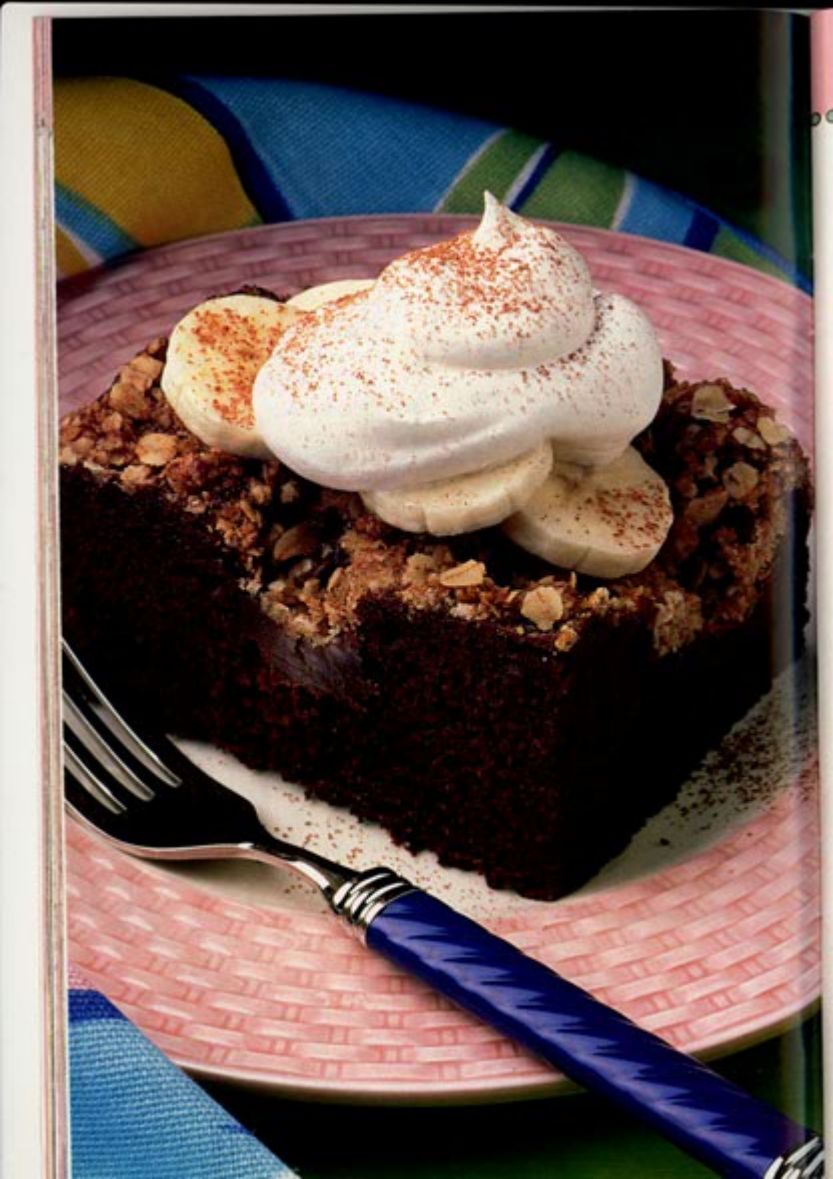
1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a 13×9×2-inch baking pan with nonstick cooking spray.

2. Prepare cake mix according to package directions. Bake about 35 to 40 minutes or until cake is firm to the touch. Remove cake from oven; cool 5 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, combine sweetened condensed milk, milk and whipping cream in a 4-cup measure. Poke holes all around the warm cake, using a wooden skewer or toothpick. Slowly pour milk mixture evenly over top of holes on cake. Let cake cool 10 to 15 minutes more to absorb all the liquid. Cover and refrigerate cake in pan at least 1 hour.

4. When cake is completely cool, spread whipped topping evenly on top. Cut into pieces and serve with fresh fruit. Keep cake covered and refrigerated.





Fudgy Banana Oat Cake

Makes 15 servings

Topping:

- 1 cup QUAKER® Oats (quick or old fashioned, uncooked)
- ½ cup firmly packed brown sugar
- ¼ cup (½ stick) margarine or butter, chilled

Filling:

- 1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate pieces
- ⅔ cup sweetened condensed milk (not evaporated milk)
- 1 tablespoon margarine or butter

Cake:

- 1 package (18.25 ounces) devil's food cake mix
- 1¼ cups mashed ripe bananas (about 3 large)
- ⅓ cup vegetable oil
- 3 eggs
- Banana slices (optional)
- Sweetened whipped cream (optional)

Heat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease bottom only of 13×9-inch baking pan. For topping, combine oats and brown sugar. Cut in margarine until mixture is crumbly; set aside.

For filling, in small saucepan, heat chocolate pieces, sweetened condensed milk and margarine over low heat until chocolate is melted, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat; set aside.

For cake, in large mixing bowl, combine cake mix, bananas, oil and eggs. Blend at low speed of electric mixer until dry ingredients are moistened. Beat at medium speed 2 minutes. Spread batter evenly into prepared pan. Drop chocolate filling by teaspoonfuls evenly over batter. Sprinkle with reserved oat topping. Bake 40 to 45 minutes or until cake pulls away from sides of pan and topping is golden brown. Cool cake in pan on wire rack. Cut into squares. Garnish with banana slices and sweetened whipped cream, if desired.

Tropical Sunshine Cake

Makes 12 servings

1 package (18.25 ounces) yellow cake mix
1 can (12 fluid ounces) NESTLÉ® CARNATION® Evaporated Milk
2 large eggs
1 can (20 ounces) crushed pineapple in juice, drained (juice reserved), *divided*
½ cup chopped almonds
¾ cup sifted powdered sugar
1 cup flaked coconut, toasted
Whipped cream

PREHEAT oven to 350°F. Grease 13×9-inch baking pan.

COMBINE cake mix, evaporated milk and eggs in large mixer bowl. Beat on low speed for 2 minutes. Stir in *1 cup* pineapple. Pour batter into prepared baking pan. Sprinkle with almonds.

BAKE for 30 to 35 minutes or until wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pan on wire rack for 15 minutes.

COMBINE sugar and 2 tablespoons *reserved* pineapple juice in small bowl; mix until smooth. Spread over warm cake, sprinkle with coconut and *remaining* pineapple. Cool completely before serving. Top with whipped cream.

Chocolate Angel Fruit Torte

Makes 12 servings

1 package angel food cake mix, plus ingredients to prepare mix
½ cup unsweetened cocoa
2 bananas, thinly sliced
1½ teaspoons lemon juice
1 can (12 ounces) evaporated fat free milk, divided
⅓ cup sugar
¼ cup cornstarch
⅓ cup cholesterol-free egg substitute
3 tablespoons fat-free sour cream
3 teaspoons vanilla
3 large kiwis, peeled and thinly sliced
1 can (11 ounces) mandarin orange segments, rinsed and drained

1. Prepare cake mix according to package directions, adding cocoa to dry ingredients. Bake according to package directions. Cool completely. Cut horizontally in half to form 2 layers; set aside.

2. Combine ¼ cup milk, sugar and cornstarch in small saucepan; whisk until smooth. Whisk in remaining milk. Bring to a boil over high heat, whisking constantly. Boil 1 minute until thick, whisking constantly. Reduce heat to medium-low.

3. Blend ⅓ cup hot milk mixture and egg substitute in small bowl. Add back to saucepan. Cook 2 minutes, whisking constantly. Remove saucepan from heat. Let stand 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Add sour cream and vanilla; blend well. Spread custard into shallow dish, cover and refrigerate until cold.

4. Place banana slices in medium bowl. Add lemon juice; toss to coat. Place bottom half of cake on serving plate. Spread with half of custard. Arrange half of banana slices, kiwi slices and mandarin orange segments over custard. Place remaining half of cake, cut side down, over fruit. Top with remaining custard and fruit. Keep cake refrigerated.

Sweet Potato Crumb Cake

Makes 6 cakes

Crumb:

- ½ cup sugar
- Zest of 1 orange
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ cup chopped pecans
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup oats
- ¼ cup (½ stick) cold butter, cut into 4 pieces

Cake:

- 1 package (16 ounces) Sweet Potato Pound Cake mix, plus ingredients to prepare mix
- Powdered sugar (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray six individual pans* with nonstick cooking spray.

2. To make crumb, combine sugar and orange zest in food processor bowl. Pulse several times to thoroughly mix. Add cinnamon and pecans; pulse until pecans are the size of peas. Reserve ⅓ cup of crumb mixture and set aside. To remaining crumb in bowl, add flour, oats and butter; pulse until butter is the size of peas; set aside.

3. Prepare cake mix according to package directions. Divide batter in half. Pour one-half of batter evenly into prepared pans. Sprinkle the ⅓ cup reserved crumb evenly on top of batter. Carefully spoon remaining batter evenly over crumb. Top with oat crumb mixture.

4. Bake 25 to 30 minutes or until toothpick inserted into middle comes out clean. Let cool in pans 15 minutes, then carefully remove by pulling straight up out of pan. Let cool completely on wire rack and dust with powdered sugar.

**We used a mini crumb cake pan with removable bottoms; 8 standard muffin pans with no paper liners can be substituted.*

Mini Tiramisu

Makes 18 cupcakes

Cakes:

- 2 teaspoons instant coffee *or* espresso powder
- 1 tablespoon hot water
- 1 tablespoon coffee liqueur
- 1 package (about 18 ounces) yellow butter cake mix
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, softened and cut into small pieces
- ⅔ cup water
- 3 eggs

Filling:

- 1 package (8 ounces) mascarpone cheese*
- ½ cup powdered sugar
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla
- ½ container (8 ounces) French Vanilla whipped topping

Topping:

- Unsweetened Dutch process cocoa powder
- Mini cookie cutter

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 18 standard (2½-inch) muffin pan cups with paper liners; set aside.

2. Combine coffee and hot water in medium bowl; stir to dissolve. Add coffee liqueur; stir well to combine. Set aside.

3. Combine cake mix, butter, water and eggs in medium bowl. Beat with electric mixer on medium speed about 3 minutes until smooth. Remove half of the batter and add to coffee mixture; mix well.

4. Spoon equal amounts of both coffee and plain batters into muffin cups. Make sure each cup is three-quarters full so cake domes over top of liner. Swirl batters together using toothpick or small paring knife. Bake for 16 to 18 minutes or until firm to the touch. Cool cupcakes in pans 10 minutes, then transfer to wire rack to cool completely.

5. To prepare filling, combine mascarpone, sugar and vanilla in a medium bowl; stir by hand to mix well. Fold in whipped topping; cover and refrigerate.

6. To assemble, remove top of cupcake (where cake meets the paper liner) with a serrated knife. Cut out a design on top piece of cake, using a mini cookie cutter. Discard (or eat!) cake scraps.

7. Spoon filling evenly among all cupcake bottoms. Dust each cupcake top with a light dusting of cocoa powder and put back on top of each cupcake. Refrigerate 2 hours before serving.

**Mascarpone cheese is an Italian soft cheese; a traditional ingredient in Tiramisu. Look for it in the specialty cheese section of your supermarket.*

Tip Dutch-process cocoa powder is milder and less bitter than natural unsweetened cocoa powder.

Mini Neapolitan Ice Cream Cakes

Makes 4 cakes (12 servings)

- 1 package (about 18 ounces) vanilla cake mix
- ¾ cup water
- 3 eggs
- ⅓ cup vegetable oil
- ⅓ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 4 cups strawberry ice cream, slightly softened
- Unsweetened cocoa powder, powdered sugar, dark chocolate curls and strawberry fans for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray 4 (5¾×3¼×2-inch) mini loaf pans with nonstick cooking spray.

2. Combine cake mix, water, eggs and oil in large bowl. Beat with electric mixer at low speed 30 seconds until moistened. Continue beating 2 minutes at medium speed until well blended. Reserve 1¼ cups batter. Add cocoa to remaining batter; stir until well combined.

3. Divide chocolate batter evenly between two prepared pans. Divide reserved plain batter evenly between remaining two prepared pans. Bake 30 minutes or until toothpick inserted into center comes out clean. Cool in pans 10 minutes. Remove cakes from pans to wire racks; cool completely.

4. Trim rounded tops of cakes with serrated knife; discard (or eat!) trimmings. Cut each cake in half horizontally. Line four clean mini loaf pans with plastic wrap, leaving 2-inch overhang on all sides. Place one chocolate cake layer in each pan.

5. Place ice cream in large bowl; beat with electric mixer at medium speed about 30 seconds or just until spreadable. Spread 1 cup ice cream over each chocolate cake layer in pans; top with vanilla cake layers. Cover tops of cakes with plastic wrap. Freeze at least 4 hours.

6. Remove cakes from loaf pans. Remove plastic wrap; trim any uneven sides. Place two cakes vanilla side up; sprinkle lightly with cocoa powder. Place remaining two cakes chocolate side up; sprinkle lightly with powdered sugar. Garnish all four cakes with dark chocolate curls and strawberry fans. To serve, cut each cake crosswise into 3 slices.

White Chocolate Macadamia Cupcakes

Makes 20 cupcakes

Cake:

- 1 package (about 18 ounces) white cake mix, plus ingredients to prepare mix
- 1 package (4-serving size) white chocolate instant pudding and pie filling mix
- ¾ cup chopped macadamia nuts

Topping:

- 1½ cups flaked sweetened coconut
- 1 cup white chocolate chips
- 1 container (16 ounces) vanilla frosting

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line 20 standard (2½-inch) muffin pan cups with paper liners.

2. Prepare cake mix according to package directions, beating in pudding mix with cake mix ingredients. Fold in nuts. Fill muffin cups two-thirds full. Bake 18 to 20 minutes or until toothpick inserted into center comes out clean. Cool in pans on wire racks 10 minutes. Remove from pans to racks; cool completely.

3. Meanwhile, spread coconut evenly on ungreased baking sheet. Toast coconut at 350°F for 6 minutes, stirring halfway, until light golden brown. Cool completely.

4. For Topping, place white chocolate chips in small microwavable bowl. Microwave on MEDIUM (50%) 2 minutes, stirring every 30 seconds, until melted and smooth. Cool slightly before stirring into vanilla frosting.

5. Frost cupcakes with topping; sprinkle with toasted coconut.

Dark Chocolate Lava Cakes

Makes 14 cakes

- 1½ cups cold milk
- 1 package (4-serving size) chocolate instant pudding and pie filling mix
- 1 package (about 18 ounces) dark chocolate cake mix
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 2 eggs
- 3 egg yolks
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- Powdered sugar (optional)

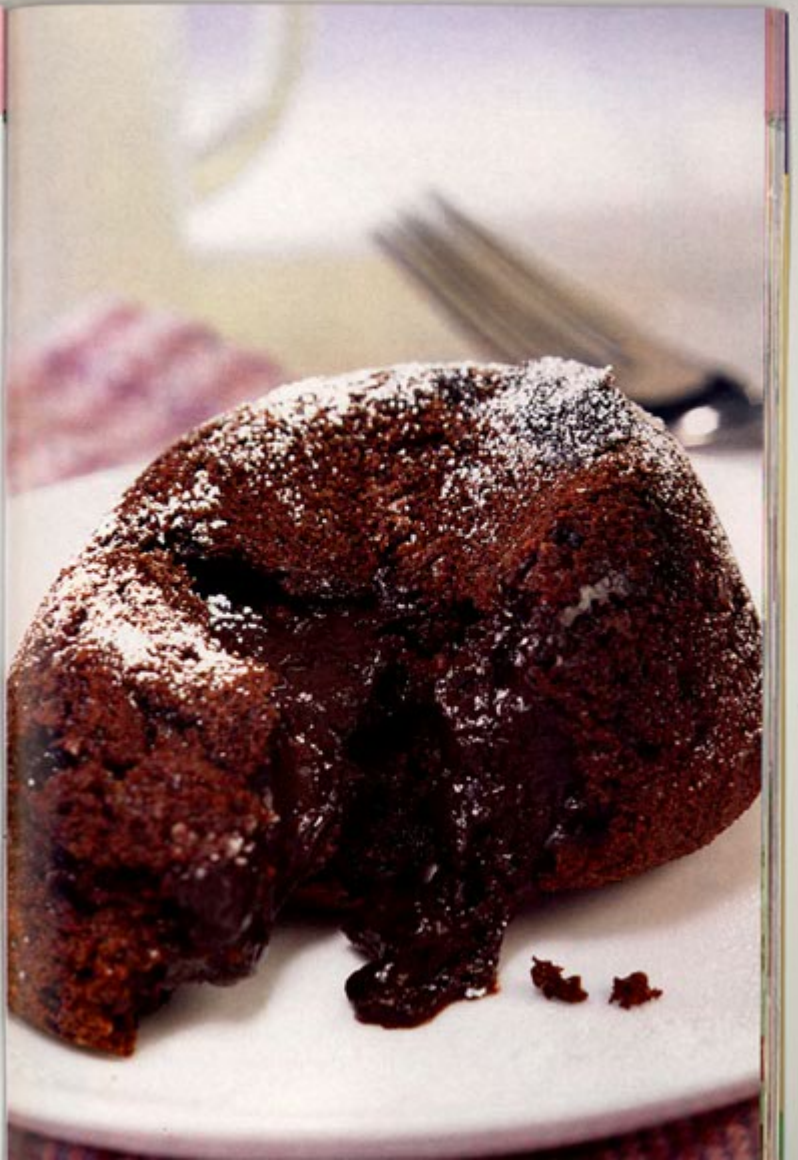
1. Combine milk and pudding mix in medium bowl; whisk until smooth. Place plastic wrap on surface of pudding; refrigerate.

2. Combine cake mix, buttermilk, eggs, egg yolks, oil and water in large bowl; stir by hand until almost smooth (a few lumps will remain). *Do not use electric mixer.* Cover and refrigerate batter 1 hour.

3. Preheat oven to 400°F. Brush melted butter inside 14 (5-ounce) ramekins. Sprinkle evenly with granulated sugar. Place ramekins on baking sheet pan.

4. Place 2 tablespoons batter into each prepared ramekin. Bake 10 to 12 minutes (batter will not cook through completely). Remove ramekins from oven. Place 1 heaping tablespoon pudding in center of each ramekin and cover with 2 tablespoons cake batter.

5. Bake 14 to 16 minutes until toothpick inserted in top layer of cakes comes out clean. Remove from oven to wire racks; cool 7 to 10 minutes. Invert cakes onto serving plates. Sprinkle with powdered sugar. Serve immediately.



Jack in the Box

Makes 6 to 9 servings

- 1 package (about 18 ounces) cake mix (any flavor), plus ingredients to prepare mix
- 1 scoop ice cream or sherbet, any flavor
- 1 red gum drop
- 2 jelly beans, any color
- White tube icing
- Flat red candy strips *or* fruit leather, divided
- 2 heart-shaped candies
- Food coloring, any colors
- 1 container (16 ounces) vanilla frosting
- Assorted small round candies
- Additional assorted candies (optional)
- 1 sugar ice cream cone

1. Prepare and bake cake mix according to package directions for 2 (8- or 9-inch) square cakes. Cool completely before frosting.

2. Place ice cream scoop in small dish. Press gum drop into center to resemble nose. Attach jelly beans, using a small amount of icing, above gum drop to resemble eyes. Cut 2-inch strip from flat red candy strip; press below red gum drop to resemble mouth. Press heart-shaped candies into sides to resemble ears. Place in freezer until serving time.

3. Divide and tint frosting as desired. Cut 1 cake into 4 equal square pieces. (Reserve remaining cake for another use.) Place one piece on serving plate; frost top. Repeat with three other pieces. Frost top and sides of entire cake. Press small candies around top, base and edges of cake. Decorate with additional candies, if desired.

4. Create clown collar by pinching remaining candy strips into a 4-inch circle; center on cake top. Decorate sugar cone, if desired. When ready to serve, center decorated ice cream scoop on clown collar and top with ice cream cone. Serve immediately.

Individual Flower Pot Cakes

Makes 18 cakes

- 18 (2½×4-inch) sterilized, unglazed terra cotta flower pots*
- 1 package (about 18 ounces) dark chocolate cake mix, plus ingredients to prepare mix
- 1 package (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
- 8 to 10 chocolate sandwich cookies, broken
- 1 container (16 ounces) chocolate frosting
- Drinking straws
- Assorted candies such as lollipops, spearmint leaves and gummy worms
- Decorating icing (optional)

**Wash and dry pots. Place in 350°F oven 3 hours to sterilize. Remove from oven; cool completely.*

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease flower pots generously; line bottoms with greased parchment paper.

2. Prepare cake mix according to package directions; stir chocolate chips into batter.

3. Place pots in 18 standard (2½-inch) muffin pan cups; pour batter into pots, filling half full. Bake 35 to 40 minutes or until toothpick inserted into center comes out clean. Remove pots from muffin pan; cool completely on wire racks.

4. Place cookies in food processor; pulse until coarse crumbs form.

5. Frost tops of cakes with chocolate frosting. Sprinkle cookie crumbs over frosting to resemble dirt. Decorate with lollipop flowers *[see note below]*, spearmint leaves and gummy worms.

Lollipop Flowers: Push straws into each flower pot for "stems." Use scissors to trim straws to different heights. Insert lollipops into straw stems. Pipe decorating icing onto lollipops to create petals and centers of flowers, if desired.

PB & J Sandwich Cake

Makes 12 servings

1 package (about 18 ounces) white cake mix, plus ingredients to prepare mix
¾ cup powdered sugar
5 tablespoons peanut butter
2 to 3 tablespoons whipping cream *or* milk
1 tablespoon butter, softened
½ cup strawberry *or* grape jam

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray 2 (8-inch) square baking pans with nonstick cooking spray; line pans with parchment paper. Prepare cake mix according to package directions. Divide batter between prepared pans.

2. Bake 30 minutes or until toothpick inserted into center comes out clean. Cool in pans on wire racks 30 minutes; remove from pans and cool completely on wire racks.

3. Carefully slice off browned tops of both cakes to create flat, even layers. Place 1 layer on serving plate, cut side up.

4. Beat powdered sugar, peanut butter, 2 tablespoons cream and butter with electric mixer at medium speed until light and creamy. Add remaining 1 tablespoon cream, if necessary, to reach spreading consistency. Gently spread filling over cut side of cake layer on serving plate. Spread jam over peanut butter filling. Top with second cake layer, cut side up.

5. Cut cake in half diagonally to resemble sandwich. To serve, cut into slices across the diagonal, using a serrated knife.

Pink Piggy

Makes 6 to 8 servings

- 1 package (about 18 ounces) white cake mix, plus ingredients to prepare mix
- 1 container (16 ounces) vanilla frosting
- Pink neon food coloring
- 3 store-bought *or* homemade cupcakes
- Pink decorating sugar
- 4 small round black gummy candies (about ¼-inch in diameter) *or* black jelly beans
- Black licorice strings *or* decorating icing

1. Prepare and bake cake mix according to package directions for 2 (8- or 9-inch) round cakes. Cool cakes completely before frosting. Combine frosting and food coloring in medium bowl until desired shade is reached. Place 1 cake layer on serving plate; frost top and side of cake. (Reserve remaining cake layer for another use.)

2. Cut out triangles from 2 cupcakes. Position "ears" on side of cake; cover with frosting. Cut remaining cupcake in half horizontally. Place cupcake half slightly below center of cake; cover with frosting.

3. Sprinkle decorating sugar on cake as shown in photo. Press 2 gummy candies above "snout" for "eyes" and remaining 2 candies on "snout." Pipe icing above eyes to resemble lashes.

Kitty Kat

Makes 12 servings

- 1 package (about 18 ounces) carrot cake mix, plus ingredients to prepare mix
- Red and yellow food coloring
- 1 container (16 ounces) cream cheese frosting
- 2 store-bought *or* homemade cupcakes
- ¼ cup chocolate sprinkles
- 1 red heart-shaped candy *or* gum drop
- 2 black round candies *or* black licorice gum drops
- Black licorice strip
- Candles *or* uncooked spaghetti pieces

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare and bake cake mix according to package directions for 2 (8- or 9-inch) round cakes. Cool cakes completely before frosting. Combine frosting and food coloring in large bowl until desired shade of orange is reached.

2. Place 1 cake layer on serving plate. Frost top of cake. Place second cake layer on top. Frost top and side of cake. Cut triangles from each cupcake for "ears." Position "ears" and cover with frosting. Make "fur" on cake using tines of fork. Scatter sprinkles around top edge of cake.

3. Position red candy for "nose" and round candies for "eyes." Cut licorice strips into 3½-inch length for mouth. Place on cake as shown in photo. Position candles for whiskers, as shown in photo.

Big Kid Cakes

Chocolate-Raspberry Layer Cake

Makes 12 to 16 servings

Cake:

- 2 packages (about 18 ounces each) chocolate cake mix, plus ingredients to prepare mixes

Filling:

- 1 jar (10 ounces) seedless red raspberry fruit spread
- 1 package (12 ounces) white chocolate chips, divided

Topping:

- 1 container (16 ounces) chocolate frosting
- ½ pint fresh raspberries
- 1 to 2 cups sliced almonds, toasted*

**To toast almonds, spread in single layer on baking sheet. Toast in 350°F oven 7 to 9 minutes until golden brown, stirring frequently.*

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray 4 (9-inch) round cake pans with nonstick cooking spray; line with parchment paper. Prepare and bake cake mixes according to package directions. Cool completely.

2. Place 1 cake layer on serving plate. Spread with one-third of fruit spread. Sprinkle with ½ cup white chocolate chips. Repeat with second and third cake layers, fruit spread and white chocolate chips.

3. Place fourth cake layer on top. Frost top and side of cake with chocolate frosting. Decorate cake in alternating concentric circles of raspberries and remaining ½ cup white chocolate chips. Press almonds into frosting on side of cake.

Nutty Toffee Ice Cream Cake

Makes 12 servings

- 1 package (about 18 ounces) devil's food cake mix, plus ingredients to prepare mix
- 2 quarts vanilla ice cream, slightly softened
- 1½ cups toffee baking bits, divided
- 1 container (14 ounces) cream-filled pirouette cookies (about 30 cookies)
- 1 container (16 ounces) chocolate frosting
- ¾ cup unsalted peanuts *or* nut topping, toasted and chopped
- Ribbon (optional)

1. Prepare and bake cake mix according to package directions for 2 (9-inch) round cake pans. Cool in pans on wire racks for 15 minutes. Remove from pans; cool completely on wire racks.

2. Place 1 cake layer on serving plate. Spread 4 cups softened ice cream evenly over cake. Sprinkle with ¾ cup toffee bits. Top with remaining cake layer. Spread remaining 4 cups ice cream evenly over cake. Cover with plastic wrap, sprayed with nonstick cooking spray; freeze about 30 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, carefully cut each cookie in half lengthwise with serrated knife.

4. Remove cake from freezer. Frost side only with chocolate frosting. Place cookie halves vertically around side of cake, as shown in photo. Sprinkle nuts and remaining ¾ cup toffee bits over top of cake. Cover with plastic wrap; freeze overnight or at least 8 hours until firm. Tie ribbon around cake before serving, if desired.

Variation: *For a beautiful holiday look, substitute candy canes for pirouette cookies and crushed peppermint candies for nuts and toffee bits.*

Piña Colada Cake

Makes 12 servings

Cake:

- 1 package (about 18 ounces) white cake mix, plus ingredients to prepare mix

Rum Glaze:

- ½ cup whipping cream
- ¼ cup dark rum
- 2 tablespoons powdered sugar
- ¾ teaspoon vanilla

Whipped Topping:

- 2 cups (1 pint) cold whipping cream
- ¾ cup powdered sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla

Garnish:

- 1 fresh pineapple, peeled, cored, cut in half lengthwise
- 2 cups flaked sweetened coconut, toasted*, divided

**To toast coconut, spread evenly on ungreased cookie sheet. Toast in 350°F oven 5 to 7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until light golden brown.*

1. Prepare and bake cake mix according to package directions for 2 (9-inch) round cake pans. Cool in pans on wire racks 15 minutes. Remove cakes from pans; cool completely.

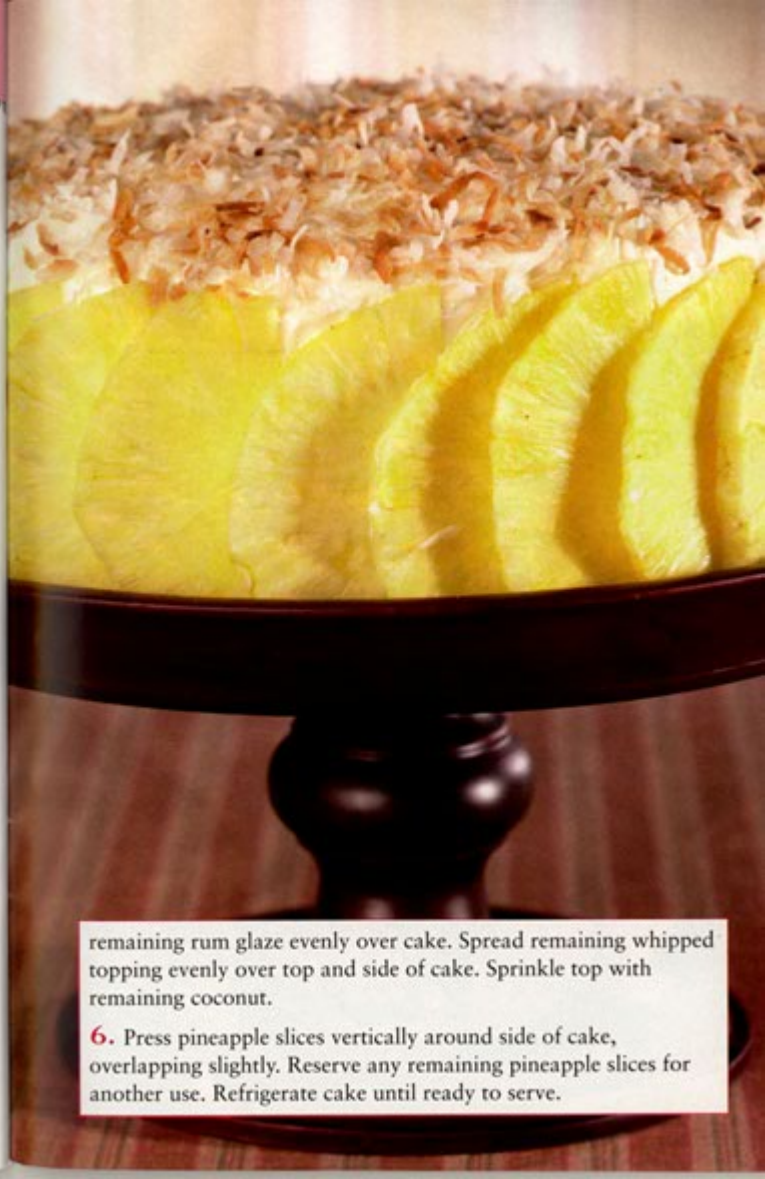
2. For rum glaze, combine all ingredients in small bowl until well blended. Cover with plastic wrap; refrigerate.

3. For whipped topping, place 2 cups whipping cream in large bowl. Whip 1½ to 2 minutes until soft peaks form. Add powdered sugar and vanilla; beat 20 seconds until stiff peaks form. Cover with plastic wrap; refrigerate.

4. Place pineapple, cut side down, on cutting board; slice very thinly. Place slices on paper towels; pat dry.

5. Place 1 cake layer on serving plate. Brush half of rum glaze evenly over cake. Spread 1 cup whipped topping evenly over glaze. Sprinkle with 1 cup coconut; top with remaining cake layer. Brush remaining rum glaze evenly over cake. Spread remaining whipped topping evenly over top and side of cake. Sprinkle top with remaining coconut.

6. Press pineapple slices vertically around side of cake, overlapping slightly. Reserve any remaining pineapple slices for another use. Refrigerate cake until ready to serve.



Pecan Praline Brandy Cake

Makes 12 servings

Cake:

- 1 package (about 18 ounces) butter pecan cake mix
- 2 egg whites
- 1 egg
- ¾ cup water
- ⅓ cup plain yogurt
- ¼ cup brandy
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped toasted pecans, divided

Praline Glaze:

- ⅔ cup packed light brown sugar
- ⅓ cup light corn syrup
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons butter
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- ½ teaspoon brandy

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a 10- or 12-cup bundt pan with nonstick cooking spray.

2. Combine cake mix, egg whites, egg, water, yogurt, brandy and oil in medium bowl. Beat with electric mixer on low speed 30 seconds. Stop mixer; scrape down bowl. Continue mixing on medium speed 2 minutes until light and fluffy. Fold in ½ cup pecans and pour batter into pan. Bake 50 to 60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 10 minutes in pan; unmold and cool completely on wire rack.

3. Combine brown sugar, corn syrup, heavy cream and butter in small saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until mixture boils. Remove from heat and add remaining ½ cup pecans, vanilla and brandy; stir to combine. Let praline glaze cool to room temperature. The glaze should be thick and dull-looking, but still pourable. Pour over top of cake. Serve immediately or keep covered at room temperature.

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